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Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Financial performance report for the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 and proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005 for the support account for peacekeeping operations

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Appropriation for 2002/03	$100,896,200
Expenditure for 2002/03	$97,145,400
Appropriation for 2003/04	$112,075,800
Proposal submitted by the Secretary-General for 2004/05	$122,093,400
Recommendation of the Advisory Committee for 2004/05	$121,278,900

I. Introduction

1. **The recommendations of the Advisory Committee would entail a reduction of $814,500 in the proposed budget for the support account for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005. The reasons for this are set out in paragraphs 16 to 86 below. The Committee also makes a number of observations and recommendations with regard to the administration and management of the resources of the support account for peacekeeping operations and areas of possible savings.**

2. **The Advisory Committee's general report on the administrative and budgetary aspects of peacekeeping operations (A/58/759) contains its views and recommendations on a number of cross-cutting issues. Consequently, in the**

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paragraphs below, the Committee deals only with resources and other items that relate specifically to the support account for peacekeeping operations.

3. The documents used by the Advisory Committee in its consideration of the proposed budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations are listed at the end of the present report.

II. Format and presentation

4. The Advisory Committee welcomes the additional refinements to the results-based presentation for the support account for 2004/05, as requested by the Committee in its previous report (see A/57/776, paras. 3-8). The Committee notes that the presentation for 2004/05 for the support account lists three expected accomplishments. A fourth one, the reorientation of the management culture, which was undertaken by the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations in the 2003/04 budget, is no longer in the 2004/05 budget proposal, since it focuses on the internal management of the Department. In response to a previous recommendation of the Committee, budget proposals for 2004/05 reflect a significantly higher percentage of more clearly measurable indicators of achievement and outputs (see A/58/715, para. 6). **This should further facilitate monitoring and reporting on performance.**

5. The performance report for the support account for the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 (A/58/703 and Add.1) includes, for the first time, actual indicators of achievement and outputs. **The Advisory Committee found the presentation lengthy and cumbersome, particularly in the addendum to the report. Many of the indicators of achievement and outputs for the period 2002/03 did not provide verifiable and measurable data; the result was that the performance report contains long explanations concerning completion or new target dates. The Committee expects the performance report for the period 2003/04 to be more concrete, streamlined and reader-friendly. In addition, there should be more careful scrutiny to ensure that external factors are relevant and realistic.**

6. **Further comments and observations of the Advisory Committee on the results-based budget presentation are contained in its general report on peacekeeping operations (A/58/759).**

7. **The Advisory Committee continues to be of the opinion that, as an important component of the proposed budget, all resources for training should be transparently reflected in the budget. Further comments are contained in the Advisory Committee's general report.**

8. The Advisory Committee notes the inclusion of a summary of follow-up action taken to implement its requests and recommendations, as endorsed by the General Assembly, as well as those of the Assembly itself, in annex III of the budget document (A/58/715).

III. Financial performance for the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003

9. The Advisory Committee recalls that the total support account resources for post and non-post requirements approved for the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 amounted to $100,896,200 gross ($87,156,900 net), including a total establishment of 702 temporary posts (see General Assembly resolution 56/293 of 27 June 2002).

10. As indicated in the Secretary-General's report (A/58/703), expenditure for the period amounted to $97,145,400 gross ($84,088,100 net), resulting in an unencumbered balance of $3,750,800 gross ($3,068,800 net) — in gross terms, 3.7 per cent of the approved resources for the period. This reflects a budget implementation rate of 96.3 per cent, a 2.3 per cent improvement over the rate in 2001/02.

11. The Advisory Committee notes that the unencumbered balance was essentially attributable to the fact that the actual vacancy rate for the reporting period was higher than that budgeted. An overall vacancy factor of 8 per cent for the Professional category and of 2.5 per cent for the General Service category had been budgeted for the 702 continuing posts approved for the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 by the General Assembly in its resolution 56/293. The actual vacancy rates were 11 per cent and 3.7 per cent, respectively. The related savings amounted to $1,829,800 out of $81,539,600 approved for posts.

12. The Advisory Committee's comments on the information contained in the performance report on individual objects of expenditure can be found, where relevant, in the discussion of the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005, in section V below.

IV. Updated financial information in respect of the current period

13. The Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly, in its resolution 57/318 of 18 June 2003, approved an amount of $112,075,800 gross ($96,755,600 net) for support account post and non-post resources for the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004 and a total staffing establishment of 743 support account temporary posts.

14. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that expenditure as at 29 February 2004 amounted to $70,298,400 (see annex I).

15. Of the 743 currently approved posts (454 Professional, 286 General Service and 3 security posts), as at 29 February 2004 a total of 708 were encumbered (425 Professional, 280 General Service and 3 security).

V. Proposed cost estimates for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005

General

16. The Secretary-General, in his report A/58/715, estimates support account resources for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005 at $122,093,400 gross ($105,619,900 net), which would provide for the staffing of 762 temporary support account posts.

17. The amount proposed, in gross terms, represents an increase of $10,017,600 or 8.9 per cent ($8,864,300 in net terms) over the total amount of $112,075,800 gross ($96,755,600 net) approved for the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004 (see A/58/715, para. 3). Most of the increase is due to the changes in standard salary costs ($9 million) and the requirements for 19 new posts ($1.2 million), offset by a reduction in non-post resources ($0.2 million).

18. The overall resources estimated for posts ($100,772,400) take into account the proposed establishment of 19 additional support account posts. These include:

(a) One new post in the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman;

(b) Seven posts in the Office of Internal Oversight Services;

(c) Eleven posts in the Department of Management (2 in the Treasury Division of the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts, 4 in the Office of Human Resources Management and 5 in the Office of Central Support Services).

The Committee's recommendations on those proposals are contained in its discussion of the organizational units to which they relate. No reclassifications are proposed.

19. The Committee further notes that staff turnover factors of 5.5 per cent and 2.3 per cent have been applied to continuing posts in the Professional and General Service staff categories, respectively, and delayed recruitment factors of 50 per cent and 35 per cent have been applied for new posts in the Professional and General Service categories, respectively, in the costing exercise.

20. In paragraph 18 of its resolution 57/318, the General Assembly decided that "any support account posts that remain vacant and any new posts that are not filled for twelve months from the date of their establishment would require rejustification in the subsequent budget submission", and requested the Secretary-General "to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session on the implementation of this decision". The Advisory Committee notes that a total of 16 posts that were vacant for 12 months as at 31 August 2003 have been "rejustified" for the period 2004/05, in response to paragraph 18 of resolution 57/318. Information relating to such posts is included in section II of A/58/715 for each unit, under the heading "Analysis of resource requirements". **The Advisory Committee points out that the requirement in resolution 57/318 is in relation to the support account posts that remain vacant and any new posts that are not filled for 12 months from the date of their establishment. That requirement is based on a recommendation of the Committee contained in paragraph 79 of its general report on peacekeeping operations for 2003/04 (A/57/772).**

21. **The Advisory Committee emphasizes that the intent of that recommendation was to reconsider posts that were still vacant at the time of the next budget submission. However, the implementation of this requirement, as described in paragraph 21 of the Secretary-General's report (A/58/715), is not consistent with General Assembly resolution 57/318, in that the report deals with posts that were vacant for 12 months as at 31 August 2003 — a stipulation that is not included in either the original recommendation of the Committee or the subsequent decision of the Assembly. The result is that most of the posts "resubmitted" have already been filled, thus making any further action on them difficult. What should be submitted in future is an indication, as of February, of posts that will likely still be vacant by the time the Fifth Committee considers the support account budget in May and that will have been vacant for at least 12 months by 30 June of a given year.**

22. **Moreover, the explanation provided for the rejustification of the posts should constitute more than a description of the functions related to the post; it should address the reasons for the vacancy, how the functions were provided while the post was vacant and a specific justification of why the post is still needed. Such information should be included in future.**

23. **The Advisory Committee is of the opinion that delays in filling vacancies have a negative impact not only on the efficient functioning of the offices involved, but also on the peacekeeping missions themselves, as well as potentially on staff morale. The Committee urges the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office of Human Resources Management to expedite the generic job description process.**

24. The request in paragraph 19 of General Assembly resolution 57/318 for details of upward and downward reclassification of posts and a breakdown of appointments and type of candidate (internal or external) for the past two years is addressed in paragraphs 22 and 23 of A/58/715. As to the request in paragraph 10 of the same resolution for a report on measures taken to improve the representation of underrepresented and unrepresented Member States and criteria used for recruitment for all support account posts, the Advisory Committee notes that a separate report will be submitted to the Assembly during the resumed part of its fifty-eighth session (see A/58/715, annex III.B).

25. The resources for consultants are estimated at $1,746,300, an increase of $659,000 over the approved resources of $1,087,300 for 2003/04. The Advisory Committee notes that most of the increase ($464,600) relates to additional requirements under the Department of Management. **In this connection, the Committee stresses the need to always verify that specialized expertise sought elsewhere is not available anywhere in-house (i.e., the United Nations Secretariat) or in the United Nations system. Furthermore, if consultancies are the only option, efforts should be made to ensure a skills transfer or multiplier effect in the units where the consultants are hired so that the benefits achieved are shared with or passed on to the staff.**

26. Resources for official travel are proposed at $4,472,400, an increase of $503,400 over the $3,969,000 approved for 2003/04. Total travel expenditure amounted to $2,612,900 during 2002/03. The savings reported for that period ($628,600) resulted in large part from the cancellation of travel to the Middle East for security reasons. Most of the increase in the provision proposed for 2004/05

relates to additional resources for training-related travel in the Military Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and additional requirements under the Office of Internal Oversight Services (see paras. 44 and 59 below). **The Advisory Committee expects, as delegation of authority to the field increases and a large amount of resources are invested in communications, information technology and training, that the demand for travel should decrease. Any savings achieved should be reported in the performance report.**

27. A provision of $899,900 is proposed for communications for 2004/05, an increase of 10.5 per cent over the resources of $814,700 approved for 2003/04. Expenditure of $792,600 is reported for 2002/03, reflecting savings of $63,800. For information technology, an amount of $5,255,600 is proposed, a decrease of $601,900, or 10.3 per cent, from the $5,857,500 approved for 2003/04. This relates mostly to a decrease in requirements under maintenance of information technology equipment. Expenditure of $4,864,800 is reported for 2002/03. The savings of $659,300 reported during that period were due mostly to the sharing of information technology facilities between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Information Technology Services Division (see A/58/703, para. 11).

28. Decreases are also shown for other supplies, services and equipment ($572,300) and facilities and infrastructure ($249,700) in view of the fact that the 2003/04 budget included a one-time provision for network connectivity between various office buildings and the Secretariat, as well as for general temporary assistance ($53,900).

29. The total resources of $1,097,500 proposed for general temporary assistance for 2004/05 constitute a decrease of 4.7 per cent, compared with the $1,151,400 approved for 2003/04. Expenditure during 2002/03 was $568,200, with savings of $61,800 reported as a result of the charging of temporary assistance and sick leave to vacant posts (see A/58/703, para. 7). The Advisory Committee recalls that the use of these resources is restricted to the provision of support during maternity or extended sick leave and for peak workload services. The Committee found disparities in the requests for general temporary assistance in connection with maternity or sick leave provisions for different offices. On several occasions the Committee has commented on the need to use this provision strictly for its intended purpose. **The Committee reiterates that resources proposed for maternity and sick leave should be monitored for consistency and that care should be taken to estimate requirements on the basis of past experience and a realistic assessment of actual need. Expenditure for the support account on general temporary assistance in 2002/03 was $568,200. Expenditure for the current period is $712,000 for eight months as at 29 February 2004, or $89,000 per month out of an approved total of $1,151,400. On this basis, expenditure for one year would amount to $1,068,000. The Committee recommends an estimate of $1 million for general temporary assistance; this represents a reduction of $97,500.**

30. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, in preparing the requirements for the support account for peacekeeping operations for 2004/05, account had been taken of the need to ensure capacity to absorb new and expanding missions during the period and to provide for a rapid deployment capability.

Detailed recommendations

A. Department of Peacekeeping Operations

Posts

31. The number of temporary support account posts is proposed at the same level approved for 2003/04. The Advisory Committee was informed that of the 539 posts currently approved for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (336 Professional and 203 General Service), as at 31 January 2004 there were 23 vacancies (22 Professional and 1 General Service). Fifteen posts have been rejustified in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (see paras. 20-23 above).

1. Office of the Under-Secretary-General

Posts

32. Two rejustifications are submitted: a P-4 post (administrative officer) in the office of the Director of Change Management and a P-3 post (research officer) in the Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit (see A/58/715, paras. 25-26). Since both posts have now been filled, the Advisory Committee has no comment to make (see para. 21 above).

Non-post resources

33. A provision for $269,000 is proposed under consultants, an increase of $169,000 over the provision approved for 2003/04, for outputs listed in the table in paragraph 28 of A/58/715. **The Advisory Committee questions the need to resort to consultants to carry out two surveys of troop/police-contributing countries on satisfaction and concerns with Department of Peacekeeping Operations planning and support processes and on perceptions of peacekeeping (requirements of $22,000 and $170,000, respectively). The Committee is of the opinion, taking into account the expertise that should be available in-house, that other modalities should be explored in order to address the need indicated in Security Council resolution 1353 (2001). The Committee recommends reducing the resources for consultants to $100,000 (a reduction of $169,000).**

34. A provision for $353,600 is proposed for official travel, a decrease of $11,400 compared with the approved resources for 2003/04. The requirements include $125,000 for staff exchange. The Advisory Committee notes that this provision has been included since 2001/02, having proved useful in allowing staff to be brought from missions to work at Headquarters for periods of three to five months for special projects or during peak workload periods. **While the Committee supports the exchange of knowledge, which is a by-product of this practice, it trusts that the level of travel will be monitored so as not to incur unnecessary expenditure.**

Other comments and recommendations

35. The Advisory Committee notes that the Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit has begun to function at full strength only recently. **However, the Committee stresses the need to operationalize best practices and lessons learned, through dissemination and timely information-sharing with all relevant parts of the United Nations system involved in the backstopping of peacekeeping**

operations, thus ensuring implementation in future missions and incorporation into policy and training exercises.

2. Office of Operations

36. The Advisory Committee enquired as to the outputs completed in relation to expected accomplishment 3, increased efficiency and effectiveness in conducting, managing, directing and supporting peacekeeping operations, reported in the performance submission for 2002/03. The Committee notes that nine system-wide task forces and working groups on peacekeeping operations were coordinated by the Office of Operations (see A/58/703/Add.1, section II.A.1 (b)) and that eight are projected for 2004/05. The Committee was informed that this was done in partnership with other entities supporting a particular programme, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations Development Programme. **The Committee welcomes this evolution from the Integrated Mission Task Force, which concentrates on cooperation with multiple partners for implementation in the field.**

3. Office of Mission Support

Posts

Rejustifications

37. A total of 12 posts are rejustified in the Office of Mission Support (see A/58/715, paras. 39-44):

(a) One P-5 post in the Office of the Assistant Secretary-General;

(b) One P-4 post in the Office of the Director of the Administrative Support Division;

(c) Four posts in the Personnel Management and Support Service (1 P-5 for the Deputy Chief of Service, 1 P-5 for the Chief of the Civilian Training Section and 2 G-7 posts for senior human resources assistants);

(d) Two posts in the Air Transportation Section (1 P-5 for the Chief of the Section and 1 General Service (Principal level) for a senior transport assistant);

(e) Two posts in the Communications and Information Technology Service (1 P-5 for the Chief, Integrated Field Information Systems, and 1 P-3 for a communications officer);

(f) Two posts in the Supply Section of the Logistics Support Division (1 P-4 for a supply officer and 1 General Service (Principal level) for an administrative assistant).

38. The Advisory Committee notes that, at the time of its hearings, all but three of the above-mentioned posts had been filled: the P-5 post for the Deputy Chief of the Personnel Management and Support Service, the General Service (Principal level) post for a senior transport assistant (Air Transportation Section) and the General Service (Principal level) post for an administrative assistant in the Supply Section, Logistics Support Division. The vacancy announcements for the first two posts were being recirculated, and a recommendation for a candidate had been made regarding the third. The functions related to those posts were performed by staff hired on a

temporary basis pending formal recruitment. The Committee was informed that a vacancy announcement for the P-5 post of the Chief of the Air Transportation Section would have to be recirculated, since the person who had encumbered the post for some time had left at the time of the Committee's hearings. **The vacancy situation in the Office of Mission Support is a cause for concern, especially since five of the vacant positions were at the P-5 level.**

Non-post resources

39. The resources proposed for travel amount to $554,600 (a decrease of $55,900, or 9.2 per cent, relative to those approved for 2003/04). The breakdown and further information is provided in paragraphs 51 to 58 of A/58/715. A provision for $326,600 is included for travel related to training in rapid deployment, management, personnel, building capacity, logistics and finance. With regard to the intention to visit national aviation bodies as part of the air safety procedures, the Advisory Committee believes that focal points should be agreed upon with those national aviation authorities that have been visited previously. In future, communication with these focal points can be carried out via e-mail and through the Permanent Missions in New York.

40. The resources for consultants amount to $464,000 (a decrease of $31,000, or 6.3 per cent, compared with those approved for 2003/04). Details are provided in paragraphs 45 to 50 of A/58/715. Expenditure for the reporting period 2002/03 totalled $557,200, a savings of $288,300, resulting from the fact that part of the work originally earmarked for consultancy was carried out by staff and specialists recruited on a short-term basis against vacant posts. **The Advisory Committee questions the need to hire a consultant to conduct a review of movement control coordination practices. The Committee requests that in-house expertise be used as much as possible in this connection. The Committee also questions the need to hire a consultant to carry out a process review in the Air Transportation Section at this time. The requirements for consultants should therefore be reduced to $346,000 (a reduction of $118,000).**

41. The Advisory Committee notes that the total resources proposed for information technology in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations amount to $4,602,800, a decrease of $334,600, resulting from lower requirements under maintenance of information technology equipment. The Committee was informed that $4,354,400 of that amount relates to the Office of Mission Support, and includes the following: $1,163,500 for acquisition of equipment, $398,400 for maintenance and repair of equipment and $2,792,500 for information technology services. The resources of $987,500 for electronic data-processing equipment, which do not include $225,000 for the acquisition of software, $317,500 for software licences and fees and $176,000 for the purchase of spare parts and supplies, would cover the costs of one additional item and 408 replacement items. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the replacement factor for personal computers in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, as well as in the whole Secretariat, is 25 per cent, in line with industry standards and best practices of the global information and communication technologies industry.

4. Military Division

Posts

42. The number of support account posts is maintained at the same level as in the previous submission — a total of 79 (61 Professional and 18 General Service). In addition, the Military Division has four regular budget posts (2 Professional and 2 General Service). The Advisory Committee notes that of the 63 Professional posts 57 are filled by seconded military officers, who rotate on average every two to three years, and that six posts are filled by civilian staff, who ensure institutional memory and consistency of practice.

Non-post resources

43. The resources of $84,000 proposed for consultants include $66,000 to provide evaluation and assessment in connection with the military or civilian police component of four peacekeeping missions. An amount of $35,000 was approved for this purpose in the context of the submission for 2003/04. The Advisory Committee was informed that the increase sought was due to the plan to conduct an evaluation in four peacekeeping missions during 2004/05, instead of two. A provision for $18,000 is also included to review the Peacekeeping Training Manual and other training publications. **The Advisory Committee is of the opinion, however, that the potential to review these publications in-house should be available, and that this possibility should be explored before resorting to consultants. The resources for consultants should be reduced to $66,000 (a reduction of $18,000).**

44. The total training resources requested for 2004/05 for the Training and Evaluation Service amount to $1,889,000 (including $18,000 for consultants, $1,300,000 for training-related travel and $571,000 for miscellaneous supplies, services and equipment). A breakdown of the activities proposed is presented in annex II to the present report. The Committee recalls that an amount of $1,753,000 was requested for 2003/04 (see A/57/776, para. 52). The increase is therefore due to additional requirements ($239,000) for training-related travel over the 2003/04 approved resources, offset by a decrease of $103,000 for consultants and miscellaneous supplies, services and equipment. Expenditure for the reporting period 2002/03 totalled $1,692,245, reflecting savings of $60,755, due to the non-use of training-related consultancies and reduced requirements under related travel.

Other comments and observations

45. The total number of outputs for the Military Division has increased from 20 in 2003/04 to 26 for 2004/05. **The Advisory Committee is encouraged by the fact that 21 of these outputs now provide measurable data, compared with only 8 in the 2003/04 submission, which should allow better performance monitoring of the resources allocated to the Military Division.**

5. Civilian Police Division

Posts

Rejustifications

46. One post is rejustified at the P-4 level for an information management officer to provide support in information technology. The Advisory Committee notes that the vacancy announcement for this post was being recirculated at the time of its hearings, since a candidate had not been identified during the reporting period (see paras. 20-23 above).

Non-post resources

47. The increase in resources is the result of additional requirements for posts ($285,000), due to the change in standard salary costs; for consultants ($81,000), in view of the need to develop a community police model for peacekeeping operations and a conflict resolution course for police officers, on the basis of environments where civilian police have been recently deployed; and for official travel ($22,200), in view of requirements for technical support (see A/58/715, paras. 71-75).

Other comments and recommendations

48. **The Advisory Committee stresses the need to keep the on-call roster up to date in view of the needs of existing and upcoming missions. The Committee also urges the dissemination of United Nations requirements, including for special skills, as widely as possible.** In this connection, the Committee was informed that in order to address recent shortfalls the Division was also considering broadening the ranks to include the use of retired police officers. This should be done in accordance with the relevant United Nations regulations.

B. Office of the United Nations Ombudsman

49. The Advisory Committee recalls that the Office of the Ombudsman was established in October 2002. Resources amounting to $128,200 are proposed under the support account for the first time for this Office. The resources proposed cover the requirements for a new P-4 post ($92,300) and non-post resources of $35,900. The Committee was informed that during 2003, of the 405 cases handled by the Office, 111 related to staff in peacekeeping operations. **The Committee recommends acceptance of this request.**

C. Office of Internal Oversight Services

Posts

50. It is proposed to increase posts financed through the support account from 53 in the 2003/04 budget (37 Professional and 16 General Service) to 60 for 2004/05 (44 Professional and 16 General Service). The changes include the following new support account posts:

(a) An additional P-4 post for the Internal Audit Division (New York) (see A/58/715, para. 101);

(b) Two P-4 posts for the regional investigation teams based in Nairobi and Vienna (ibid., para. 102);

(c) One additional General Service (Other level) post in the Executive Office to replace general temporary assistance for which funds were approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 57/318 (ibid., para. 103);

(d) A net increase of three posts for resident auditors, including 2 new P-5 and 3 new P-4 posts, offset by the reduction of two posts (1 P-3 and 1 General Service (Other level)).

51. A number of redeployments are also proposed (ibid., paras. 96-99).

1. Internal Audit Division

52. A new P-4 post is proposed to be established in the Internal Audit Division, in order to provide information technology audit coverage of peacekeeping missions, in view of the quantity of resources invested in this area at Headquarters and in field missions (ibid., para. 101). At the same time, a P-4 post is to be redeployed from the Internal Audit Division to the Information Technology Unit in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General, in order to develop and enhance information technology systems utilized by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (ibid., para. 97). **The Advisory Committee is not convinced of the need to create a new post for a P-4 in the Internal Audit Division, at a time when another post in the same Division, at the same level, is being proposed to be redeployed to a different unit. The Committee does not recommend acceptance of the creation of this post at this time.**

2. Regional investigators

53. The Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly approved the establishment of eight posts for regional investigators to be divided evenly between the regional hubs in Vienna and Nairobi (1 P-4, 2 P-3 and 1 General Service (Other level) per hub) and decided to review the posts and functions in the context of the 2004/05 budget, taking into account the workload and coverage of their activities (see resolution 57/318, para. 15). The Committee notes the proposal to strengthen the Vienna regional hub, increasing the number of posts to a total of eight, by establishing an additional new P-4 post and redeploying one P-3 post from the Internal Audit Division and two posts from the Investigations Division in New York (1 P-5 and 1 General Service (Other level)) to provide direction and assistance (see A/58/715, paras. 98, 99 and 102). The Nairobi hub would also be strengthened with the addition of one new P-4 post.

54. The Advisory Committee was informed that it was too early to review the workload and coverage of activities by the regional investigators, since it had not been a year since this activity had been operational. However, interim information provided to the Committee indicated that, while the staffing selection process was under way, short-term staff had been recruited on an interim basis, thus allowing the clearance of the backlog of approximately 100 cases and the assessment and prioritization of new cases. From July 2003 to February 2004, 92 cases were received, mainly in Europe (50 per cent), Africa (36 per cent) and Asia (7 per cent). As at 29 February 2004, 87 cases were open, out of which 42 related to the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), 12 to the United

Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and 9 to the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). During this period 117 cases were reviewed, assessed and closed.

55. The rationale for the proposed increase in posts in the regional hubs is the ability to operate two two-person teams, consisting of a P-4 and a P-3, who would report to a P-5 in Vienna, responsible for the overall management of investigations, direction and follow-up. **The Advisory Committee recommends acceptance of the request for two P-4 posts for the regional investigators as well as the proposed redeployments. An analysis of the investigator programme should be provided following the conclusion of the first year of its operation.**

3. Executive Office

56. An additional General Service (Other level) post is proposed to regularize the function approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 57/318, justified in terms of the heavier workload of the Executive Office in view of the consolidation of the peacekeeping requirements under the support account. In this connection, the resources under general temporary assistance decrease by $60,200, reflecting the reduction of the previously approved funds for the functions of the General Service (Principal level) post proposed to be regularized. **The Advisory Committee recommended acceptance of the General Service (Other level) post in paragraph 69 of A/57/776.**

4. Resident auditors

57. It is proposed to treat the resident auditors as a pool, with their numbers increasing from 27 to 30 for 2004/05, and to distribute and reallocate them according to the budgetary size and complexity of each mission, as shown in the table in paragraph 95 of A/58/715. Three of the resident auditor support account posts, approved in the budget of UNMIL for 2003/04 (1 P-5, 1 P-4 and 1 General Service (Other level)), are being transferred in order to consolidate the funding of resident auditor posts under the support account (see A/58/715, para. 95 (e)). A new P-5 post, for a chief resident auditor, is being established in UNMIK, and a regional Middle East audit office would be created with two new posts (1 P-5 and 1 P-4) to oversee internal audit coverage of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) and the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) (ibid., paras. 95 (c) and (f)). The latter missions were previously covered from New York through visits once every three years.

58. **The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the proposal with regard to the pool of resident auditors and the establishment of the related new posts. The Committee reiterates, however, that the pool in no way constitutes a permanent number of posts, and that the number of resident auditor posts should be adjusted as mission mandates terminate or as new missions are approved.**

Non-post resources

59. Resources for official travel amount to $807,000, an increase of $147,500 (ibid., para. 111). The Advisory Committee notes that this is due mostly to

additional requirements of the Monitoring, Evaluation and Consulting Division to travel to peacekeeping missions in the course of evaluations to be undertaken (ibid., para. 113) and the travel of 20 resident auditors to Headquarters to attend a planned workshop on the management of effective audit coverage (ibid., para. 115). Information on evaluations, both completed and to be carried out, is included in the Committee's general report on peacekeeping.

60. **In view of the recommendation in paragraph 52 above that the P-4 post in the Internal Audit Division not be approved, the post resources should be decreased to $9,063,400 (a reduction of $92,200). Non-post resources should also be adjusted downward to $1,241,800 (a reduction of $15,400).**

D. Office of Legal Affairs

61. Requirements of $30,000 for travel are included to follow up on the Office of Internal Oversight Services recommendation, contained in its in-depth evaluation of legal affairs (E/AC.51/2002/5), that legal officers travel to peacekeeping missions to gain a better understanding of legal issues there. The Advisory Committee notes that an amount of $10,000 was included in the 2002/03 budget for a trip to UNMIK. However, as indicated in the performance report, due to the fact that coordination efforts were not finalized before the end of the reporting period, the travel plans were carried forward to be completed in 2003/04 (see A/58/703, para. 20). The Committee was informed that the plan was to visit four missions during the 2004/05 period: UNMEE, MONUC, the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and UNMIK. **The Committee is of the opinion that the legal officers on the scene may well be able to communicate much of this information back to Headquarters, thus avoiding excessive travel costs. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that the resources for travel be reduced to $15,000.**

E. Department of Public Information

62. The proposed requirements for the support account related to the Department of Public Information are $422,800, an increase of $84,400 (24.9 per cent) over those approved for 2003/04, as a result of the changes in salary costs for two continuing support account posts and additional requirements for travel.

63. The Advisory Committee notes that the proposed travel resources of $53,600 provide for the travel of Department of Public Information staff to MONUC, UNMIL, UNMEE, UNOMIG and UNMIK to work with mission personnel in developing and improving public information strategies and activities ($32,400) and for a one-week specialized training course to enhance participation in peacekeeping rapid deployment teams.

64. **The Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the proposed support account resources for the Department of Public Information. The Committee expects the Department to demonstrate a more proactive role in its provision of support to the information elements of peacekeeping missions.**

F. Department of Management

1. Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts

Posts

65. An additional P-4 post for a database administrator and a P-3 post for an investment accountant are proposed in the Treasury Division (see A/58/715, paras. 144-145). The Advisory Committee recalls that these posts were requested in the context of the 2003/04 submission and that the resources for the functions were granted under general temporary assistance.

66. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the two posts support the treasury investment database (OPICS), which has enabled the pooling of investments in fixed-income securities and significantly increased return on investments. The payment system (SWIFT) will be implemented in June 2004, which will result in savings of $280,000 per annum in wire transfer fees. Opportunities for additional savings will be created through the integration of the Integrated Management Information System/OPICS/SWIFT cash management system, increasing efficiency of operations, automating a substantial portion of the bank reconciliation process and enabling savings in bank charges. The Committee was further informed that by performing in-house the functions for the maintenance of OPICS, $491,520 in annual outsourcing expenses would be saved. **Accordingly, the Committee recommends approval of the request for the two posts (P-4 and P-3) for the Treasury Division.**

Non-post resources

67. The resources of $460,000 for general temporary assistance reflect a decrease of $101,500, as compared with the resources for 2003/04, mostly resulting from the proposed conversion of the two posts proposed for the Treasury Division. The proposed requirements include a provision for $325,400 to ensure the flow of work and prevent the accumulation of backlogs in the processing of payments of the Accounts Division and $74,500 for the six-month equivalent of a P-3 level post, in order to allow the Peacekeeping Financing Division to manage additional workload resulting from new missions, while continuing current projects and improvements.

68. The resources of $214,400 for travel constitute a decrease of $229,600 compared with the resources approved for 2003/04, in view of the non-recurrent requirements included for training workshops held in Cyprus in July 2003. The Advisory Committee notes that $104,100 of the proposed provision is training-related (ibid., paras. 154-156). In this connection, the Committee was informed that total training requirements amount to $161,000, the balance of $57,000 relating to training fees.

Other comments and observations

69. The Advisory Committee notes that the Contributions Service and the Accounts Division, previously included in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General, are now consolidated into the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts.

70. In paragraph 90 of A/57/776, the Advisory Committee requested that an external management review of the Accounts Division be undertaken, including the deployment of staff in the light of the use of information technology for this function. The Committee was informed that a more comprehensive review of the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts was planned for 2004. **The Committee looks forward to the timely submission of conclusions of the review. In future, time frames for the completion of such projects should be indicated at the outset.**

2. Office of Human Resources Management

Posts

71. Four new posts are proposed (see A/58/715, paras. 160-169):

(a) One P-3 post for a staff counsellor in the Division for Organizational Development;

(b) Three posts in the Medical Services Division: 1 P-4 for a medical officer, 1 P-3 for a psychologist and 1 General Service post for a nurse.

72. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the Division of Organizational Development, which has only one Professional staff member currently (at the P-4 level), and no support account resources, has since mid-2003 experienced an increase in its workload, of which 30 per cent consists of requests for counselling services and advice related to mission service. The Office provides such services, on a confidential basis, to staff leaving for or returning from mission service, as well as to their families. The Office considers that the services provided have an impact on staff members' effectiveness, productivity and ability to perform in the field. The Committee was also informed that, while the functions do not duplicate the work of the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator, which focuses on critical incidents and trauma of staff in the field, or that of the Medical Services Division, which provides medical and psychological services, they complement them. **The Committee recommends acceptance of the proposal to establish the post of staff counsellor at the P-3 level in the Division for Organizational Development.**

73. **The Advisory Committee agrees with the proposal to establish the post for a psychologist at the P-3 level, in order to assist medical officers at Headquarters in assessing the mental health status of individuals returning from mission assignments, and the General Service post for a nurse in the Medical Services Division. However, the Committee is not convinced of the need at this stage to establish the post of the medical officer at the P-4 level, in view of the 31 current posts in the Division (15 regular budget, 10 extrabudgetary and 6 support account posts) and the additional General Service post recommended for a nurse. Moreover, the Committee encourages better coordination and cooperation with other medical services in the United Nations system.**

Non-post resources

74. The resources of $417,700 for consultants constitute an increase of $220,600 over the resources approved for 2003/04. The proposed amount is related to

requirements of the Division for Organizational Development, resulting from additional programmes identified jointly by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office of Human Resources Management to be provided in the areas of mission readiness, performance management (including competency-based interviewing and selection skills and the electronic Performance Appraisal System), supervisory skills and a pilot workshop on work planning ($376,000), as well as the continuation of work started during 2003/04 in the area of administration of justice ($38,000). The Advisory Committee was further informed that one staff development officer (funded from the support account), in addition to managing and developing programmes and coordinating with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, delivers some of the training and briefings and will pilot new programmes. However, the consultants are essential as specialists in those areas and will develop, specifically in the area of mission readiness, a CD-ROM and online training. The Committee has made several observations on the issue of training in its general report on peacekeeping operations.

G. Office of Central Support Services

Posts

75. A total of five new posts are proposed for the Procurement Division (see A/58/715, paras. 181-185):

(a) One P-5 post for the Chief of the Logistics and Transportation Section;

(b) Two P-3 posts for procurement officers;

(c) Two P-2 posts for junior procurement officers.

76. The Advisory Committee notes that the Procurement Division has an approved total of 70 posts (37 financed under the regular budget, 29 from the support account and 4 from technical cooperation funds). Of this total, there are three P-5 posts in the Division, one each funded from technical cooperation funds, the support account and the regular budget. The Committee recalls that the Commercial Procurement and Transportation Services (predecessor of the Procurement Division) had four P-5 regular budget posts shown in the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, including one transferred from conference services. That post was transferred back to conference services during the biennium 1996-1997. Another P-5 post was redeployed to the Office of the Assistant Secretary-General for functions related to the Committee on Contracts at Headquarters in the 1998-1999 biennium, and one more was redeployed to the Travel and Transportation Service for the Chief of Service, as the procurement and transportation functions were separated in the 2000-2001 biennium, leaving a balance of one regular budget post in the Procurement Division.

77. The Logistics and Transportation Section consists of six Professional staff (2 P-4, 3 P-3 and 1 P-2) and 10 support staff. From the information provided, upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee notes that the value of procurement for the Section in 2003 was in excess of 50 per cent of the procurement value of the entire Division, primarily in support of the transportation requirements identified in the Logistics Support Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. **In view of the responsibilities involved, the necessary capacity for rapid deployment and the anticipated surge related to new missions, the Committee recommends the**

approval of the two P-3 and two P-2 posts to strengthen the Logistics and Transportation Section of the Procurement Division.

78. **As for the P-5 post, the Advisory Committee calls attention to what is stated in paragraph 76 above with regard to the utilization of posts at this level in the Procurement Division. Under the circumstances, the Committee requests that a management review of the staffing and organizational structure of the Procurement Division in relation to all sources of financing be carried out. Pending the results of that review, the Committee recommends that an additional P-5 post not be established.**

Rejustification

79. One General Service post (Principal level) is rejustified in the Information Technology Services Division for a telecommunications technician. At the time of the hearings of the Committee, the application period had been closed and the selection process was ongoing.

Non-post resources

80. The resources of $162,000 for consultants, an increase of $154,000 over the resources approved for 2003/04, are related to the procurement training of 150 staff, an annual chief procurement officers' conference and the training of 65 Security and Safety Service personnel in VIP protection (see A/58/715, paras. 187-191). The Advisory Committee was informed that the training requirements for 2004/05 amount to $336,000, consisting of $162,000 for consultants, $171,200 for training-related travel and $2,800 for other supplies, services and equipment. A total of 150 staff are planned to be trained in UNMIL, the United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (MINUCI), MONUC, UNMEE, the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, and UNFICYP.

81. **The Advisory Committee expects greater efficiency and accountability to be achieved through the training exercises. Further comments on the issue of training are contained in its general report on peacekeeping.**

82. The 99.4 per cent decrease in resources for miscellaneous supplies, services and equipment is due mostly to the non-recurrent requirement for the procurement training programme budgeted in 2003/04. The Advisory Committee recalls that $572,000 was included for training during that period.

83. The resources of $447,200 for travel reflect an increase of $197,200 over the resources approved for 2003/04, due mostly to security threat assessments to be conducted by the Security and Safety Service during the period 2004/05 in 10 missions. The Procurement Division will conduct management review visits to UNMIL, MINUCI, MONUC, UNMEE, UNIFIL, UNMIK, UNFICYP, MINURSO, and the United Nations Logistics Base ($120,000).

Other comments and observations

84. The Advisory Committee requested a comprehensive examination of the merits of establishing a global procurement hub for all peacekeeping missions at the United Nations Logistics Base, transferring both post and non-post resources financed from the support account at Headquarters and retaining only a few posts in New York for policy and liaison functions (see A/57/776, para. 99). The Committee was informed

that the report was being prepared and that it would be submitted to the General Assembly during the resumed part of its fifty-eighth session.

H. Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator

85. An amount of $1,286,800 is proposed for the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator, an increase of $108,000 over the resources approved for 2003/04. This is due mostly to the changes in standard salary costs and an increase of $15,400 for official travel, relating to training of mission security management teams and security officers, as indicated in paragraph 206 of A/58/715. **The Committee recommends approval of the support account resources proposed.**

86. The Advisory Committee further notes that the Secretary-General has submitted a report on the safety and security of United Nations staff to the General Assembly (A/58/756), which deals with the related requirements for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator and the Department of Management in relation to security arrangements in peacekeeping operations. The Committee's comments and observations are contained in its report on the subject (A/58/758).

VI. Conclusions of the Advisory Committee

87. The action proposed to be taken by the General Assembly in connection with the support account is indicated in paragraph 40 of the performance report for the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 (A/58/703). **The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the action proposed by the Secretary-General therein.**

88. The action to be taken by the General Assembly in connection with the financing of the support account for the 12-month period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005 is set out in paragraph 217 of the budget report (A/58/715).

89. **In the present document, the Advisory Committee has made recommendations for reductions that would total $814,500 gross ($749,700 net). Accordingly, the Committee recommends that the General Assembly approve total staffing and non-staffing requirements of $121,278,900 gross ($104,870,200 net) for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005. The Committee also recommends that miscellaneous income of $4,600,000, the amount of $127,800 that was not applied to offset the amounts prorated among the individual peacekeeping budgets relating to the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 and the amount of $741,000 relating to additional staff assessment income that was not prorated among peacekeeping missions for the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 be applied to the resources required for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005, and that the balance of $116,551,100 gross ($99,401,400 net) be prorated among the individual peacekeeping operation budgets to meet the requirements of the support account for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005.**

Documentation

- Report of the Secretary-General: performance report on the budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 (A/58/703 and Add.1)
- Report of the Secretary-General on the proposed budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005 (A/58/715)
- Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the financial performance report for the period from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002 and proposed budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004 (A/57/776)
- Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/58/694)
- Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the audit of the policies and procedures for recruiting Department of Peacekeeping Operations staff (A/58/704)
- General Assembly resolution 57/318 of 18 June 2003

Annex I

Actual expenditure for the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004

As at 29 February 2004

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Category	*Apportionment*	*Total expenditure*
Posts	90 524.6	56 250.6
General temporary assistance	1 151.4	712.0
Consultants	1 087.3	468.0
Official travel	3 969.0	2 488.6
Facilities and infrastructure	6 872.3	6 292.9
Ground transportation	-	26.1
Air transportation	-	206.2
Communications	814.7	509.4
Information technology	5 857.5	2 899.3
Other services, supplies and equipment	1 799.0	445.3
Total	**112 075.8**	**70 298.4**

Annex II

Proposed activities of the Training and Evaluation Service, Department of Peacekeeping Operations

1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005

(United States dollars)

Activity	*Outputs*	*Amount*
Represent the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the United Nations peacekeeping training environment	Conduct five training recognition visits to peacekeeping centres and give presentations at five peacekeeping conferences	115,000
Design, prepare and conduct United Nations peacekeeping training support for national, regional and international institutions	Five peacekeeping training courses/exercises to enhance the rapid deployment capability of troop-contributing countries	1 209 000
	Conduct six military peacekeeping training courses/seminars for troop-contributing countries	
	Sponsor 30 participants from emerging troop-contributing countries in peacekeeping training courses	
	Conduct three specific peacekeeping training courses/seminars for countries contributing civilian police	
Develop, produce and distribute United Nations peacekeeping training materials	Peacekeeping training publications (produce one new, revise two and translate one into all official United Nations languages, and reprint and distribute 28)	213,000
Enhance existing and establish new mission training cells	Establish three new mission training cells in new peacekeeping missions	50,000
Further develop the standardized generic training modules	Develop standardized generic training modules, levels II and III, through regional seminars	302 000
	Produce, translate and distribute standardized generic training module, level I	
Total		**1 889 000**

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Fifty-eighth session
Agenda item 134
Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Procurement and contract management for peacekeeping operations

Report of the Secretary General*

Summary

The present report is submitted to the General Assembly pursuant to paragraph 22 of resolution 57/290 B of 18 June 2003, in which the Secretary-General was requested to submit to the Assembly at its resumed fifty-eighth session a comprehensive report on procurement and contract management for peacekeeping operations.

The present report of the Secretary-General provides the General Assembly with information concerning the actions being taken by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in partnership with the Department of Management to improve procurement and contract administration following the recommendation of the Board of Auditors on United Nations peacekeeping operations for the financial period ended 30 June 2003 (A/57/5 (vol. II)) and in response to the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/57/772).

* The issuance of the present report has been delayed owing to time constraints experienced in its coordination and formulation as a result of current expansion of activities in the area of peacekeeping missions and the need to attend to urgent operational issues.

04-30589 (E) 050504

I. Background

1. In its resolution 57/290 B, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its resumed fifty-eighth session a comprehensive report on procurement and contract management for peacekeeping operations, containing specific proposals addressing any possible conflict of interest that might arise in the area of procurement and contract management concerning staff members associated with the procurement cycle, including the feasibility of establishing a code of ethics, a declaration of independence and provisions to ensure confidentiality of information associated with their functions as United Nations staff members, and also taking into account the discussion on procurement and management contained in the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/57/772, paras. 116-119).

2. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is mindful of the need to ensure that appropriate safeguards are provided in the procurement system to protect the integrity of the process, the Organization and its staff members. In close cooperation with its partners in the Department of Management, it has made considerable strides in addressing the deficiencies in the area of field procurement and the training needs identified by the Board of Auditors (see A/57/5 (vol. II)).

II. Code of ethics

3. Following the recommendation of the Board of Auditors, a number of new initiatives have been put in place to ensure that all staff working in procurement are made aware of and understand their responsibilities in this area, including conducting of ethics training for chief procurement officers and drafting of ethical guidelines, which are to be promulgated in April 2004. Upon promulgation, the guidelines will be made available to all staff members in the Organization through the Intranet and will also be distributed to all staff involved in the procurement process, both at Headquarters and in the missions. The newly revised Procurement Manual also contains a chapter entitled "Ethics and Professional Responsibility". The Procurement Manual is available on the Intranet and has also been disseminated to the missions. In addition, both the procurement foundation course provided by the Office of Human Resources Management and the advanced procurement training course developed by the Procurement Division contain components on ethics.

4. As recommended by the Board of Auditors, the Procurement Division has reviewed the issue of the signature of a declaration of independence by all staff associated with the procurement cycle and has sought the opinion of the relevant stakeholders. In this regard, the Division has issued an instruction to remind all staff of their responsibilities in this area and, in particular, of the need to ensure confidentiality of information associated with their functions. The instruction has been placed on the Procurement Division's Intranet site and all chief procurement officers in peacekeeping missions have been requested to ensure that staff are made aware of the instruction.

5. The issue of potential conflicts of interest, including employment of former United Nations procurement officers by suppliers to the United Nations and vice versa, is addressed in principle in the ethical guidelines developed by the

Procurement Division. Enforcement of such a principle in actual employment conditions will, however, require careful study.

III. Improved procurement and contract management in the peacekeeping missions

6. Procurement plans are reviewed by the respective sections of the Logistics Support Division at Headquarters to determine how the requirements will be best fulfilled, procurement being only one of several options. The mission plans are reviewed by the Logistics Support Division against surplus assets at other missions, operational and strategic stock at the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, assets from liquidating missions and contingent-owned equipment from troop-contributing countries or contributed by Member States. In order to better synchronize the process, the Procurement Division and the Logistics Support Division have transitioned procurement planning from the traditional calendar year to the peacekeeping financial year, thereby allowing the missions to match their procurement plans to their budget plans. The importance of proper acquisition planning continues to be emphasized by both Divisions and the quality and timeliness of the submissions received from the missions have improved. It is recognized, however, that further improvement needs to be made in this area, which will remain a priority.

7. Over the last 12 months, the Procurement Division has undertaken management missions to the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) and the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and has held workshops with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF). During these visits, the chief procurement officers and mission staff were given the opportunity to address specific issues or areas of concern directly with senior staff of the Division. Local procurement staff were also briefed on procurement reform initiatives and recently instituted best practices within the Division (such as the use of "best value" source selection), the United Nations system and the field of procurement in general. In addition, the Division released staff to participate in the fact-finding and start-up phases of new missions, such as those of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (MINUCI) as well as the missions that will soon be established in the Sudan and Burundi, with a view to developing essential procurement capacity on the ground at the outset of these missions.

8. Advanced field procurement training took place in the first quarter of 2004 in six locations, with attendance of staff from peacekeeping missions in the region of these training sites. As part of the training programme, the Procurement Division also assigned one of its own staff members to answer any specific questions arising in relation to procurement at Headquarters. The Division is also working with the United Nations Staff College and other United Nations organizations to develop a United Nations system-wide common procurement and certification programme under the auspices of the Inter-Agency Procurement Working Group to meet the longer-term training needs.

IV. Excessive lead time

9. The continued high level of activity in many existing missions and the initiation of many new missions play a significant role in determining the lead time for the procurement process and delivery of goods and services. The Procurement Division, in close cooperation with the Logistics Support Division, continues to introduce initiatives to improve the process and increase capacity, some of which have already been discussed in the present report. Other initiatives include: the establishment of direct communications between the procurement officers in the field and the Procurement Division through a "24/7" hotline and a designated focal point, who communicates daily with the chief procurement officers and other mission staff on advice, feedback and follow-up regarding procurement issues; recommendations of the local committees on contracts are now sent directly to the Procurement Division for presentation to the Headquarters Committee on Contracts, thus further reducing lead time; and participation by the Procurement Division in the selection process for procurement staff being recruited or assigned to field missions. These undertakings and others have all contributed to an improvement of the procurement capacity of the missions and have been well received by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

10. There are also many external factors that affect lead times, including the reluctance of vendors to abide by the stringent United Nations terms and conditions, changes in operational requirements associated with the uncertain nature of peacekeeping missions and market capacity. The Procurement Division and Logistics Support Division closely monitor progress of priority cases to ensure that missions receive these goods and services as and when they are needed.

11. The Procurement Division is also working with the Logistics Support Division to develop a common procurement management system to facilitate the exchange of procurement-related data between the Headquarters and peacekeeping missions. In the meantime, information on systems contracts is now available online to peacekeeping missions so that they can place orders directly against established contracts and reduce lead times.

V. Vendor performance report

12. Missions have been directed and are reminded on an ongoing basis of the importance of completing contractor evaluation reports quarterly and comprehensive evaluation reports at the end of the contract period. This enables the monitoring and documenting of compliance of a particular contractor and provides a record of past performance that can be used in future evaluation exercises. The contractor performance evaluation report was introduced in February 2002. Field missions have completed approximately 90 contractor evaluations to date. Staff members of the Procurement Division have also been directed to ensure that contracts are not extended or renewed without careful review of vendor performance.

VI. Vendor registration

13. In order to improve the current vendor management system, the Procurement Division, in cooperation with other members of the Inter-Agency Procurement Working Group, initiated a comprehensive review arrangement, now used by the United Nations system and by other public and private entities, with a view to developing a single harmonized system that follows industry "best practices". Upon completion of this review, it is envisaged that the recommendations will also be implemented in the field missions. The initial stage of this project is now complete and the results will be reviewed and discussed among the United Nations agencies at the upcoming meeting of the Inter-Agency Procurement Working Group in Indonesia in June 2004.

14. In the meantime, the Procurement Division has become a partner in the United Nations Global Marketplace (www.ungm.org), which is to serve as a single gateway for potential suppliers to apply for registration with participating organizations within the United Nations system. While the Global Marketplace is still in its infancy, it is envisaged that it will also be deployed in peacekeeping missions. In addition, the Marketplace will eventually allow organizations of the United Nations common system to share vendor performance information, which will help to improve the quality of suppliers serving the Organization.

VII. Conclusion

15. While the recent significant expansion of peacekeeping activities poses a serious challenge to the Organization in its quest to ensure that all missions are adequately staffed with properly trained and experienced personnel, the Secretary-General wishes to assure the General Assembly that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Management will continue to work closely to further improve the quality of procurement and contract management in the peacekeeping missions.

VIII. Action to be taken by the General Assembly

16. **The General Assembly is requested to take note of the present report.**

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Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Analysis of establishing a global procurement hub for all peacekeeping missions in Brindisi, Italy

Report of the Secretary-General*

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 57/320 of 18 June 2003, in which the Secretary-General was requested to include in his report on a comprehensive examination of the merits of establishing a global procurement hub for all peacekeeping missions at the United Nations Logistics Base in Brindisi, Italy (UNLB), as recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (see A/57/772/Add.9), the merits of relocating all support account posts and non-post resources at Headquarters pertaining to the Logistics Support Division, as well as those related to communications and information technology services related to peacekeeping missions, to Brindisi.

The Secretary-General conducted a comprehensive review of the merits of establishing such a procurement hub and transferring logistics support functions to UNLB. The review focused on the advantages and disadvantages of creating the procurement hub at Brindisi and the operational impact on the efficient and effective functioning of the Logistics Support Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Procurement Division of the Office of Central Support Services, Department of Management, of the Secretariat. The review concluded that while there are some advantages to creating such a hub, they are far outweighed by disadvantages. Based on the review, the creation of such a procurement hub for peacekeeping missions is not considered to be an efficient and effective use of the Organization's resources.

* The issuance of the present report has been delayed owing to time constraints experienced in its coordination and formulation as a result of current expansion of activities in the area of peacekeeping missions and the need to attend to urgent operational issues.

04-30595 (E) 040504

I. Background

1. In its resolution 57/320, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to include in his report on a comprehensive examination of the merits of establishing a global procurement hub for all peacekeeping missions at the United Nations Logistics Base in Brindisi, Italy (UNLB), as recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,[1] the merits of relocating to Brindisi all support account posts and non-post resources at Headquarters pertaining to the Logistics Support Division, as well as those related to communications and information technology services related to peacekeeping missions. The present report addresses these issues.

II. Review and analysis of the proposed relocation

2. The support account posts in the Procurement Division of the Department of Management sustain the procurement needs of United Nations peacekeeping operations. More then 65 per cent of such procurement originates in and is administered by the Logistics Support Division. The findings of the review, which investigated the advantages and disadvantages and, in particular, the operational impact of establishing a procurement hub at UNLB, are set out below.

A. Advantages

3. There are numerous advantages to the establishment of a global procurement hub at UNLB, including: having rent-free premises provided and, thus, being able to reduce the pressure for office space allocation at Headquarters; having the opportunity to operate in a closer time zone to the majority of peacekeeping missions; enhanced ability to perform on-site contract management for strategic deployment stocks for peacekeeping requirements; and reduced cost of operating in Italy (staff costs, etc.) as opposed to Headquarters. In reality, should it be decided to establish a procurement hub in Brindisi, no monetary savings would be achieved since additional resources would be required within the Procurement Division and in liaison functions within the Logistics Support Division, the field mission systems and the Procurement Division.

B. Disadvantages

4. There are a number of disadvantages to the establishment of a global procurement hub, including the difficulty of attracting and maintaining qualified and experienced international staff due, in main, to the absence of international or foreign schools. This may lead to increased costs in education grants for enrolment in schooling away from the duty station. A move to Brindisi could also result in high vacancy rates (as is currently the case), disruption to essential services and the consequent hiring of local professional staff, which, in turn, would have a detrimental impact on the current geographical diversity of staff. Coordination challenges from operating in a different time zone from the majority of the daily points of interaction at Headquarters and the loss of surge capacity (that is, an inability to utilize the staff of the Procurement Division at Headquarters to assist

during peaks and vice versa) would also have a negative effect on the quality of services being provided. Other costs to the organization, which are not immediately visible, are those associated with the relocation of staff and the need to increase the resources both in Brindisi and at Headquarters during the period of the move in order to ensure uninterrupted service to Headquarters and the peacekeeping missions.

III. Organizational issues

5. In carrying out the review, the following was assumed: (a) the organizational structure of the Procurement Division and the Logistics Support Division would not change significantly as a result of geographic relocation and (b) entities external to the Procurement Division (clients, the Office of Legal Affairs, the Headquarters Contracts Committee, the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), the permanent missions to the United Nations, consular commercial services) and the Logistics Support Division (the Office of Operations, the Military Division and the Administrative Support Division), with whom interaction is required, will remain at Headquarters.

A. Functions of the Logistics Support Division

6. The Logistics Support Division, the only source of technical logistical expertise at Headquarters, is responsible for providing advice on this field to the senior management of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and other United Nations departments in order to ensure that there is a clear understanding of required and available resources, as well as of any constraints, when planning and implementing peacekeeping and peace-building missions. The Division represents the logistics interests of field missions at Headquarters and provides direction and guidance to them in order to ensure that effective logistics support is provided for the fulfilment of their mandates as set forth in the relevant Security Council resolutions. The Division is also required to respond to and address organizational and external demands, often at short notice, from, among others, the Security Council, the General Assembly and its bodies and committees, internal and external auditors, United Nations agencies, high-level studies and Member States. In addition, the Communications and Information Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is responsible for satisfying the information and communications technology (ICT) needs of missions worldwide, including the development of appropriate information systems and testing and analysing them prior to deployment.

B. Functions of Procurement Division

7. Currently, there are 29 support account posts in the Procurement Division (17 Professionals and 12 General Service posts). The Division, the only source of technical procurement expertise at Headquarters, is responsible for providing such advice to senior management of the Department of Management as well as to other departments of the United Nations. In addition, the Division, as the lead agency for the procurement of certain significant commodities, undertakes international

competitive bidding to establish multi-agency agreements, thus providing support to the specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations, and leads the Common Services Procurement Working Group under the Secretary-General's reform initiative. The Division is also required to respond to and address organizational and external demands, often at short notice, from, among others, the Security Council, the General Assembly and its bodies and committees, internal and external auditors, United Nations agencies, high-level studies and Member States.

8. As stated in paragraph 2 above, the Logistics Support Division is the main requisitioner of the services of the Procurement Division. Both Divisions rely on daily face-to-face collaboration to ensure the effective planning and procurement of common peacekeeping requirements as well as to facilitate volume discounts through consolidated buying and large systems contracts. In addition, since some requirements are procured under joint systems contracts for both the Logistics Support Division and Headquarters, interaction between the Division and technical divisions at Headquarters is required on an ongoing basis. Global procurement for peacekeeping operations is currently carried out by the Field Procurement Section and part of Logistics and Transport Section, which are supported by the common infrastructure of the Procurement Division: the Office of the Chief and the Support Services Section (vendor registration, IT support, contract support, registry, bid opening and archives). The Communications and IT Support Team of the Field Procurement Section procures not only on behalf of the Logistics Support Division, but generally on a consolidated basis to include clients at Headquarters, the international tribunals and offices away from Headquarters. The total procurement volume for peacekeeping in 2003 exceeded $600 million, including local procurement in the field.

IV. Review of the Procurement Division and the Logistics Support Division

9. The review focused closely on the interactions within and external to both the Logistics Support and the Procurement Divisions as well as on their operational functioning. In addition to the extensive interaction within the Logistics Support Division, it has extensive interaction with other entities, including: the Office of Mission Support, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Procurement Division, other United Nations departments, the legislative bodies of the Organization, and the permanent missions of Member States. This is consistent with the recently adopted integrated mission planning process for peace operations, which provides a sequential, integrated planning framework for both new missions and new phases of existing missions. The planning process emphasizes the need for integrated and synchronized planning among all functional areas of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations as well as with other departments and stakeholders in the planning process. The planning process is characterized by the sharing of information, which, in a series of steps, brings together the expertise of several disciplines, including political, military and police, logistical, financial, personnel, legal and procurement, enabling each to contribute effectively to the overall outcome.

10. As far as peacekeeping procurement is concerned, the most important interactions of the Procurement Division are with the Logistics Support Division, as

its major client, as well as the necessary interface with the peacekeeping missions. The Division also has extensive interactions on a regular basis with other United Nations departments, organizations of the common system, the Headquarters Contracts Committee, the Office of Legal Affairs, legislative bodies of the United Nations, OIOS, permanent missions and the commercial sections of the consulates of Member States.

11. The analysis of the Logistics Support Division concluded that, as a whole, its functions cannot be transferred to Brindisi because the majority of the critical core functions undertaken by the sections and services of the Division, including: operations, the Field Mission Systems Section, logistics operations (Operational Support Service), movement control (Operational Support Service), air transport, surface transport, supply, engineering, medical (all Specialist Support Service) and the Aviation Safety Unit, require "live" interaction with interlocutors external to the Division located at Headquarters. A number of functions within each of the sections/services do not depend critically on "live" interactions. These functions are, however, performed by staff with concurrent responsibilities for other functions that do require "live" interaction at Headquarters. Relocation of some staff within each specialized section would require the creation of additional layers of management as well as liaison functions to ensure continued immediate and efficient operational support. The analysis did consider that two functions of the Division, within the Field Mission Systems Section, could be performed at UNLB because they are essentially conducted through "delayed" interactions and the staff performing them do not have concurrent responsibilities. These functions are: developing information systems to meet the user communities' requirements; and testing and analysis of new systems prior to deployment.

12. As mentioned in paragraph 8 above, the Field Procurement Section and part of the Logistics and Transport Section are supported by the same common infrastructure within the Procurement Division that supports the Headquarters Procurement Section: the Office of the Chief and Support Services Section (vendor registration, IT support, contract support, registry, bid opening and archives). In addition, the Field Procurement Section, because it procures IT-related goods and services both for the field and Headquarters, would need to be divided and augmented with additional resources in order to maintain the same level of efficient operational support for its IT clients in New York and in the missions. Any division of the functions of the Procurement Division and the move of the Field Procurement Section and the Logistics and Transport Section would: require the creation of duplicate support and liaison infrastructures; weaken other important areas, such as management control and oversight over the procurement function in general; provide less cohesion and consistency within procurement; and weaken the capacity to manage and direct overall procurement strategies for reform and lead agency agreements within the United Nations system as a whole.

V. Conclusion

13. The review concluded that while there are some advantages in creating a procurement hub at UNLB, the disadvantages far outweigh them, in particular the negative operational impact on the functioning of the Procurement Division and the Logistics Support Division, with the exception of those services relating to the Field Missions Systems Section (see para. 11 above) if such functions were relocated to

Brindisi. Based on the above, it is considered that creating such a procurement hub for peacekeeping missions is not an efficient and effective use of the Organization's resources.

VI. Action to be taken by the General Assembly

14. **The General Assembly is requested to take note of the present report.**

Notes

[1] A/57/772/Add.9, para. 22.